



This is a book about writing as righting. At mid-life Diane Freedman turns to the books of Thoreau, not to mention his landscapes. Practicing the nature cure and the narrative cure, she writes, in poems, essays, and journals, about family, feminism, and literary history, loss, divorce, dating, accidents, animals, waterways, local landscapes, and teaching environmental literature in ruburban New Hampshire. She sojourns with books and domestic beasts, tramps brambles and trails, and basks in language, love, and lake-front sun. Thoreau loved a “broad margin” in his life and Whitman, another influence, “a certain free margin.” Out of these, Carl Bode maintained—and Freedman shows—poetry could grow. Taking direction also from new environmental writers such as Ian Marshall, John Elder, Janisse Ray, Sandra Steingraber, and Amy Seidl and from other hybrid or narrative and autobiographical critics, this is a book of intense observation, advocacy, lyricism, sweetness, and sadness.

“Though it’s Thoreau who provides Diane Freedman with her orienteer’s compass in this marvelous rattlebag of a book, I thought often of Basho while reading it. The mix of prose and poetry here is more local and intimate than in Basho’s haibun, but it has the same steady attentiveness to the moments of a day—a sureness at home in curiosity, no matter how far out on the edges Freedman gets. The solitude at the center of this book is peculiar and consoling—it makes a reader feel accompanied.”

—David Rivard, author of *Otherwise Elsewhere*, *Wise Poison*, and *Torque*



Diane P. Freedman is Professor of English and Core Faculty Member in Women’s Studies at the University of New Hampshire, the author of *An Alchemy of Genres: Cross-Genre Writing by American Feminist Poet-Critics*; co-editor of *Teaching Prose*; editor of *Millay at 100: A Critical Reappraisal*; and co-editor of *The Teacher’s Body: Embodiment, Authority, and Identity in the Academy*, *Autobiographical Writings across the Disciplines: A Reader*, and *The Intimate Critique: Autobiographical Liter-*

ary Criticism. She teaches courses in poetry, memoir, nature writing, women’s literature, and the Holocaust.

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Contact: orders@hiraethpress.com

Contact Author Direct for Events: Diane.Freedman@unh.edu